

*Report of the Committee*  
*on*  
LITTER  
IN THE  
ROYAL PARKS



LONDON  
HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE  
1955

## COMMITTEE ON LITTER IN THE ROYAL PARKS

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## *Report*

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE NIGEL BIRCH, O.B.E., M.P.

*Sir,*

1. We were appointed by your predecessor, Sir David Eccles, in February, 1954, with the following terms of reference:

“ To advise the Minister of Works on ways of encouraging the public to keep the Royal Parks tidy and free of litter, and to suggest improvements which might be introduced by the Ministry to help towards this end ”.

We have held fourteen meetings, in the course of which we have heard evidence from the Ministry's Parks staff about the problem of litter, and planned a series of experiments to test methods by which it might be reduced. We have closely examined the results of these experiments, and their implications for the control of litter. We are glad to note that these methods have attained considerable success, as can be seen from the statistics reproduced in Appendices I and II. We feel that we can now end our proceedings and leave it to the Ministry to continue the drive to keep the Parks clear of litter.

We now have the honour to submit our Report.

## PART I

### The problem of litter

2. We believe that unless effective measures are taken against the scattering of litter, the problem will grow progressively worse and be a continuing blight on our civilisation. Waste material increases with the development of higher standards of living and hygiene. Retail sales, for instance, whether of food hygienically packed or of other goods attractively presented for sale, provide waste in increasing quantities, but this only becomes litter when it is disposed of in the wrong places. Litter scattering is, therefore, more a consequence of bad habits than of civilisation itself. We have only to travel to certain foreign cities to realise that litter is no problem where high standards of living are accompanied by a parallel development of civilised habits and where public opinion makes an offender realise that to drop litter in public places is a social offence. Much of a nation's reputation is built up of impressions of the way of life of its capital. Litter harms this reputation and is often at its worst where it can harm it most. London, and particularly its central open spaces, carries the responsibility of presenting British life to a growing number of visitors from overseas. We have, therefore, regarded our task of great importance and we have concentrated on a study of litter in the most central of the Royal Parks—St. James's Park, The Green Park, Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens. We have treated these central Parks as a laboratory for experiments of general application, and we are confident that our findings will be of wider significance than for the limited areas we have chosen.

3. The most serious aspect of our problem is that litter is at its worst at State ceremonies. Great pains are taken on these occasions to produce decorations worthy of their dignity and historical significance: yet part of the nation's response is to leave the ceremonial route thickly strewn with debris. Enormous quantities of litter were removed from the Coronation stands in 1953, and even from Westminster Abbey itself. All could be avoided by the simple habit of carrying away empty the packages which were not too much trouble to bring when full.

4. The problem of litter has emerged in an age of general plenty; habits must be engendered to deal with it. This is a problem of education, not so much of youth as of adults—since the facilities already exist and are effective in schools and youth clubs. Hence it is above all a problem of publicity. We wish to record that we have been most generously assisted in our work by all the independent organs of publicity: by the Press, Broadcasting and Television Services, and others, who enabled our work to be widely known to Londoners and to the nation. Our efforts were also widely reported in the Commonwealth. We do not doubt that such success as we have achieved in developing a "litter conscience" in the users of the Royal Parks can largely be attributed to this help. The inclusion among our members of representatives of the youth clubs of London created a remarkable response in the Press and we have sought to sustain the very wide interest in our proceedings which was evoked at the start.

5. We consider that while, of course, they have no moral responsibility for the litter scatterer, the manufacturers and distributors of the raw material of litter—the packages and wrappings of food, tobacco, etc. and newspapers—have an

important part to play in dealing with the problem of litter. We are encouraged by a growing recognition among manufacturers of packaged products of a sense of obligation to help lessen the litter problem, and an awareness of an opportunity to contribute to the solution of a growing social problem. We hope that many will find it not only possible but attractive from the publicity standpoint to display some small reminder on packages or on counters requesting the user to find and use a litter bin. We have had much co-operation in this matter from manufacturers of ice-cream, and we hope we may enlist the full support of tobacco manufacturers, especially in view of the findings of the sample analysis reported in Paragraph 12.

6. Observation has shown that less litter is dropped in tidy and formal areas of the Parks. We consider that this is largely due to appreciation, conscious or otherwise, of neatness and attractiveness. We have given some thought to the psychology of the litter scatterer. It has been reported to us that two reasons are most frequently given in self-defence to Park Keepers by litter-droppers: "It's our own Park and we can do what we like in it" and "It gives a man a job to pick it up". We doubt whether these arguments are linked to motive in many instances. We regard the problem simply as one of habit-formation and of convention. As we have mentioned, in certain European countries the convention of tidiness in public places is more deeply rooted: and we see no profound reason why we should not aspire to similar conditions in this country. Already many persons have unimpeachable habits with litter, and even where litter is thick many use litter bins; on the other hand there is undoubtedly a hard core of persons absolutely confirmed in the habit of dropping litter, even in the shadow of the bins. But for the majority it is a matter of weighting the balance; of stimulating a new pattern of behaviour. We have seen no evidence that litter-dropping is restricted to any particular social class.

7. These considerations have led us to recommend a change in emphasis in anti-litter campaigns. Too often in the past reliance has been placed on references to the necessary but purely negative penalties of the law, coupled with very sporadic enforcement. We are certain that a solution cannot be found simply by intensifying a campaign of prosecutions. It is worthy of mention that a very large proportion of the numerous letters received by the Committee from the public have called for more stringent enforcement of the law. Many have gone so far as to ask for a system of on-the-spot fining such as exists in France and in certain American States. We would deprecate any departure of this kind from the traditional processes of British summary jurisdiction. Furthermore, in spite of the letters we have received, we consider that a campaign of prosecutions of any kind would not be in accord with general public opinion. Without more positive measures, it would be both fruitless and unjust to punish a few of the thousands who are daily guilty of dropping litter. We welcome, of course, effective measures against the obviously flagrant cases; and we are glad to note that in recent prosecutions for litter offences in Hyde Park the Magistrates have taken an increasingly serious view of the matter. But we consider that emphasis should be laid on constructive ideas: on the preservation of the beauty of the Parks, and the dignity and majesty of ceremonial. We have acted on this policy in our recommendations for notices in the Parks (Paragraph 10), and for ceremonial (Paragraph 21).

8. Changes of habit of the kind we are considering have not been unknown in recent history. Fear of tuberculosis among the general public a generation ago led to the growth of a public opinion which condemned the habit of spitting in public

places, and it has virtually disappeared. It may be a matter for regret that, in the case of litter, it is not possible to make use of a similar fear, but there is no reason why public opinion should not be encouraged to register a similar condemnation, notably absent at present, of the litter thrower as a social offender and a bad-mannered person. It has been suggested that the enormity of the litter problem might be brought home to the public most effectively by leaving all the litter lying about in a carefully chosen area for a week or so. The resulting spectacle of tattered and filthy refuse would, in the view of the promoters of this idea, be more potent than words. It was argued that the very efficiency of the Ministry's litter collection masked the problem from the public. We rejected this idea as unhygienic, difficult to control, and generally impracticable; but we find it difficult to avoid having some sympathy with those who wish to shock the public into better behaviour.

9. After a general review, we went on to a detailed analysis of the litter problem in the Royal Parks. We have recognised three aspects of the subject, which in our view require quite different methods of treatment in each case:

- (i) the normal weekday problem of lunch-hour crowds, and of visitors and others, who "take a turn in the Park";
- (ii) the week-end holiday crowds who spend fine weather in the Parks;
- (iii) the problem on Royal Ceremonies.

Our programme of experiments was carefully planned to deal with each problem. In Part II of this Report we give a full account of each problem and the experimental methods we devised to attack it. We were handicapped throughout the season by consistently bad weather, which kept the crowds in the Parks below the numbers for 1953; satisfactory samples were, however, obtained. We were able to study in detail only one major Royal Ceremony: the return of Her Majesty the Queen from the Commonwealth tour, on 15th May, 1954. In Part II, and in Appendices I and II, we give results in detail; here we shall summarise some of the more important lessons of the experiments.

10. We are satisfied that measures to persuade the public to use litter bins must be accompanied by the provision of a proper quantity of litter bins in accessible and conspicuous places. Moreover, any expenditure must be set against the reduction in the cost of litter collection, as three times as many men are required to pick litter off the ground as are needed to empty bins. Second, the existence of better facilities for depositing litter should be made known by appropriate notices, not of a threatening character (though these have their place), but designed to appeal to the public's sense of the beauty of the Parks. A coloured notice with floral border, which is illustrated in this Report, was prepared at our recommendation; we consider it meets these requirements most effectively. It carries the words "This Park is beautiful—please help to keep it tidy by putting litter in the bins". The erection of the notice attracted many favourable comments, including some from overseas. Third, we are sure that the effectiveness of anti-litter measures must be tested by the collection of adequate statistics; and we were fortunate in being able to compare results obtained after the adoption of our experimental methods with corresponding figures for the previous year. Fourth, we are certain that a direct approach to the public by means of loud-speaker appeal or otherwise is not generally appropriate in the Royal Parks. We have rejected the suggestion that such appeals should be used in areas such as The Mall. But we consider that some areas of great popularity, to which the public would not go for quiet contemplation and which present special problems

of peculiar difficulty, can best be dealt with in this manner; we advised the employment of such methods at the Serpentine Lido (Paragraph 20). Finally, with regard to ceremonial occasions, we are sure that a solution can only be found by persuading the public generally to retain litter until after the end of the ceremony. For the reasons described in Part II, normal methods of dealing with litter disposal are very difficult to apply on such occasions.

11. No measures to deal with the problem of litter can be completely successful if the litter bins themselves are not attractive items of garden furniture and do not fit in with the beauty of the Parks. As our experiments in St. James's Park showed, the litter bin can itself be an important item in anti-litter publicity—a poster without words. We have therefore given attention to the design of a litter bin which is appropriate for general use in the Royal Parks. We list in Appendix III the requirements which we consider should be met by any successful design. We have had consultations with the Council for Industrial Design and we have also seen a series of designs of litter bins submitted to the Ministry of Education for the National Diploma of Industrial Design. At our recommendation, the Chief Architect's Division of the Ministry of Works has developed a prototype from a design originally used by the London County Council, to whom we are obliged for permission to adapt it. It comprises an outer container of vertical teak slats, between which is seen the inner enamelled metal container painted a deep cherry\* which our experiments had proved to be the most satisfactory colour, combining conspicuousness with attractiveness. We consider it important to associate in the minds of the public one colour with our objective. This use of colours is effectively made by the General Post Office for pillar boxes and telephone booths, and the London Transport Executive for underground railways; and we are not without hope that this colour may become a standard one for litter collection not only in the Royal Parks but throughout the country. The prototype is illustrated, and its specifications are given in Appendix IV. We have also considered preliminary designs of a larger litter bin for those areas in the Parks where the quantities of accumulated litter require it.

12. The results of the experiments show a consistent improvement in the ratio between litter placed in bins and left on the ground. If statistics for the week-end August 28th–29th (one of the few fine week-ends) are compared with the August Bank Holiday of the previous year, a marked improvement in this ratio is evident. In Hyde Park, as much litter was left on the ground in 1953 as was put in bins; in 1954 four times as much was put in bins. In St. James's Park, the proportion on the ground has dropped from a third to a seventh. This improvement has been maintained even at crowded places, such as Speakers' Corner. The results of the sample analysis (Paragraph 18 and Appendix V) were of equal interest. About one match-box and cigarette end in five, and scarcely more cigarette packets, were put in bins; and the majority of sweet wrappings and tickets were thrown down. On the other hand, the greater part of the food and fruit skins was found in bins. Note was taken of the newspapers found on the ground, which revealed a very wide range, including "The Times".

13. We are confident, as the result of our experimental work, that effective progress can be achieved in the control of litter, and that the Royal Parks, which are the ornament of London, both for its inhabitants and for visitors from the provinces and overseas, will eventually not be defaced by careless behaviour.

\* Rose Karen Poulsen (British Colour Council Wilson Chart, Vol. 2, No. 722).

Improvement will be cumulative; the more the public is educated in litter consciousness, the more the remaining offenders will become ashamed or at least conscious of their behaviour. We make the following recommendations.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) The present density of bins in St. James's Park and The Green Park should be maintained; and bins in the rest of the central Parks increased to a similar density as soon as possible.
- (2) Extended use should be made of the new notice (Paragraph 10) in addition to continued use of the existing warning, for which we have suggested a less impersonal wording.\*
- (3) While not generally appropriate in the Royal Parks, special publicity techniques, such as were employed at the Serpentine Lido (Paragraph 20), may be used to good effect in isolated areas of great popularity.
- (4) Litter statistics should continue to be kept for the Royal Parks, and significant results continue to be given wide publicity.
- (5) Publicity for ceremonies should be concentrated on maintaining the dignity and majesty of the proceedings by asking the public to keep hold of litter and afterwards to place it in the bins provided in adjacent areas.
- (6) As part of the policy to bring home to the public the attractiveness of the Parks, the Ministry should publish a Guide to the Royal Parks, and include in it a suitable reference to the problem of litter.
- (7) The new litter bin (Paragraph 11) should be adopted as standard equipment in St. James's Park and The Green Park as soon as possible; we confidently expect that its success there will warrant installation generally throughout the Royal Parks.
- (8) Other authorities with responsibilities for litter collection should be invited to adopt similar techniques, including the use of the standard bin and colour so that they can readily be recognised everywhere.

\* Existing wording: "Penalty £5. Persons leaving litter will be prosecuted".

Recommended wording: "No litter please. Leaving litter is an offence for which you can be fined up to five pounds".





# NO LITTER PLEASE

Leaving litter is an  
offence for which you  
can be fined up to  
FIVE POUNDS

## PART II

### The analysis of the problem and the attack

#### THE WEEKDAY PROBLEM

14. The habitual stroller in the Parks is, on the whole, not a litter scatterer. In St. James's Park, where a large part of the litter is dropped by persons walking along the railled paths, he is apt to drop litter chiefly when a bin is out of sight. He responds well to more bins and to an appeal to his appreciation of the beauty of the Park which he frequents for recreation. In his case the problem is chiefly one of sparing him the trouble of searching for a bin, and reminding him of the nuisance of litter.

#### THE WEEK-END PROBLEM

15. The majority of the many thousands who frequent the Parks in holiday periods and on fine week-ends comes for amusement in a truly British tradition, particularly developed among Londoners. The problem of the casual stroller is present, but in addition the picnicker and the sun-bather create a new problem. They leave spread newspapers and empty food and drink containers in great numbers. This problem is however largely confined to certain popular localities. It seems that those who use the Parks for relaxation (especially those who prefer deck chairs) rather than as places of amusement are, on the whole, careful not to leave litter on the ground. Litter tends to be concentrated round areas where recreation is obviously provided—as at Speakers' Corner, the Serpentine Lido, handstands, etc. We consider that a more direct approach to the public in the critical areas is needed and is consistent with the spirit and amenities of the Parks.

#### ROYAL CEREMONIES

16. Ceremonial occasions present a specialised problem in the control of litter. People are densely packed along the route, both unable and unwilling to move from their places. It is not practicable to ask them to leave the positions they have held, perhaps for many hours, to find a litter bin, however many there may be. Nor can there be a great concentration of litter bins; they detract from the decorations, get in the way, and are trampled and climbed on by the crowd to get a better view. More than a few were torn from their supports, upturned, and used as vantage points on the day of Her Majesty the Queen's return from abroad. In any case, bins are accessible only to those jammed up against them. Yet the litter problem is extremely severe: the habit is growing amongst the public of gathering many hours before the event, equipped with newspapers, packages, and food. Compared with the 1953 Coronation, both the crowds and the litter along The Mall on this occasion were modest; yet sixteen tons of litter were afterwards collected. It is unwise to underestimate the influence of this spectacle on opinion from abroad.

#### THE PROGRAMME OF EXPERIMENTS

17. We devised the following methods of testing the reaction of the public to ways of dealing with the problems summarised above.

(i) *for the weekday problem:*

(a) the provision of a greater number of litter bins;

- (b) painting them in attractive and conspicuous colours;
- (c) the provision of new notices appealing to the public's appreciation of the Parks;
- (d) the use of Park Keepers specially briefed to warn the public against dropping litter, and in the last resort to enforce the anti-litter Regulations;
- (e) a sample analysis of litter.

(ii) *for the week-end problem:*

- (f) the Speakers' Corner experiment;
- (g) the Lido experiment.

(iii) *for Royal Ceremonies:*

- (h) the arrangements for Her Majesty the Queen's return, May 1954.

18. We selected St. James's Park and The Green Park as the appropriate area to carry out the first five of these experiments. We decided that our requirements for the availability of litter bins would be met by doubling the existing density of bins until there were 320 in an area of 146 acres. In practice, this meant a distance of between 20 and 30 yards between bins along the paths, though a less frequented open area or an area less intersected with paths would require fewer. We chose three gay and attractive colours (primrose yellow, pale blue, and aluminium) which in our view did not spoil the appearance of the Parks, and in addition we experimented with pillar box red for bins adjacent to buildings. These experiments revealed that we had yet to find a completely satisfactory colour, and we subsequently chose deep cherry as more suitable (Paragraphs 11 and 19). At our recommendation, the Ministry erected the new poster (Paragraph 10) in 26 conspicuous places close to Park entrances, and at other focal points, and particular care was taken in siting the boards on which the notices were displayed so as to minimise interference with the scenery of the Park. In order, however, to render them most effective, we advised that the new notices should not be placed alongside the existing notice boards in the Parks, where they would tend to be ignored. In addition, we considered it important that a litter bin should be close to all notices in order more clearly to establish the association between the appeal to keep the Parks tidy and the provision of facilities to achieve this. The Ministry used the maximum force of Park Keepers available to patrol the area. Each man received instructions to caution as tactfully as possible members of the public seen dropping litter, and to take further proceedings only if the individual concerned refused to pick up his litter. The combined methods were first applied during Easter, 1954, and were found to be so successful that these arrangements, suitably modified for less crowded periods, remained in force throughout the summer of that year. The consistent improvement, to which we have already referred, has led us to regard these measures as capable of breaking the back of the problem of day-to-day litter in the central Parks. Less than a sixth of the litter is now being left on the ground, and while there is much room for further improvement, this represents a very satisfactory result in present-day conditions. It is fair to say, however, that the improvement has been achieved by additional public expenditure as well as by an improved response from the public; and there is a continuing need for publicity. We can reasonably look forward to further improvement, particularly since less litter is dropped in tidy areas than in littered ones. The results of the sample analysis have already been summarised in Paragraph 12 and are given in detail in Appendix V. The contents of four bins in a

typical area chosen at random were carefully listed and compared with general litter from an equivalent area. The object was to seek to establish whether litter-dropping was a habit more closely associated with the users of certain goods than others, and the findings have considerable significance for the identification of the particular trains of habit which give rise to litter.

19. We were more cautious about success in dealing with the popular and more densely frequented areas of Hyde Park. We selected Speakers' Corner in order to test in different conditions the techniques which were successful in St. James's Park. Speakers' Corner, with its dense crowds around the rostrums, reproduces to some extent the problems of ceremonial conditions. We recommended an increase in the number of bins until there were 24 in this limited space, and they were painted the approved deep cherry. We were glad to note that a substantial improvement in the ratio between litter in bins and on the ground resulted in this difficult area.

20. We were anxious to assess the effects of a more direct approach to the public by means of loudspeaker and otherwise. We have already stated that we do not consider such methods generally consistent with conditions in the Royal Parks, but we considered an experiment should be made in the most appropriate locality in order to establish the value of such techniques. Even if the experiment had been a failure, and had involved us in a measure of criticism, we still would have regarded the trial as well worth while. At the same time, we were alive to the mistake of devising a remedy no less offensive than the disease itself. We selected the Serpentine Lido because it presented special problems. It is very densely occupied in fine weather, gay and festive in atmosphere, and has a bad litter record. It is, moreover, situated near the centre of a large Park and the immediate environs are much less densely frequented. In addition to the standard techniques of frequent and attractively coloured litter bins and the use of an appeal in the form of notices at the entrance, we recommended the use of a bright banner mounted on an awning on the barge operated by the Ministry to chlorinate the water, bearing the slogan:

*"PLEASE PUT LITTER IN THE BASKETS"*

The central feature in the experiment was, however, the use of messages broadcast by a well-known voice, in this case that of Mr. Gilbert Harding. We recognised that the first message\* would have to be used with discretion; and we decided that it should be broadcast every two hours only and introduced by a few bars of a popular tune. In this way, we were able to reach the vast majority of visitors to the Lido without offending by repetition. A second message† was recorded for the end of the day to encourage a special effort to tidy up in the evening. The experiment was made at Whitsun, and again in August. Poor weather prevented large attendances, but of the 132 lbs. of litter left in the Lido over Whitsun, only 6 lbs. was collected from the ground. We are therefore satisfied that these special techniques have a proper and most effective place in the campaign to rid the Parks of litter. We consider that the use of broadcast messages in

\* "This is Gilbert Harding, not talking rubbish this time but talking about rubbish—about litter. Are you enjoying yourselves? Well, I certainly hope so. But what about the newspapers, the sandwich wrappings, the cigarette packets, the lemonade and ice-cream cartons? For heaven's sake don't leave them about. Use the litter basket, won't you? There are plenty of them. Do please use them."

† "Now it is nearly time to pack up and go home. What about the rubbish? What about the litter? Oh, go on and have a last look round. Pick it up—pick it up and put it in the baskets. Thank you!"

this manner would be capable of wide application at functions, and, with Mr. Harding's agreement, the Ministry of Works has made the recordings generally available for use at functions where the consent of the organiser has been obtained and the event is being held on enclosed premises.

21. Our attack on the litter problem at ceremonies was in many ways the most difficult as well as the most important of our tasks. On our advice, the Ministry, in May, sought and obtained as much prior publicity as was possible by Press and by radio for an appeal to avoid dropping litter along the route of the Royal procession. Slogans such as "Keep the route clean for the Queen" were used. The Ministry accepted our recommendation that the mechanical road sweeper used to clean the route of ceremonial processions immediately beforehand should carry an anti-litter message. We advised the Ministry to concentrate litter bins on paths leading away from the route, and in fact 275 bins were placed on or near the route. Throughout, emphasis in publicity was placed on *keeping* litter until the ceremony was over. We considered whether other measures, such as the use of mobile hand-trucks passing along the crowds immediately before the troops lined the route, and carrying slogans, were practicable, but difficulties of organisation and of reconciling such proceedings with the spirit of the ceremony have caused us to abandon this device, at least as an immediate project. The first reaction to these measures has not been very encouraging, and we cannot claim that we are approaching a solution to this difficult problem. Clearly, a general change in habit and convention is needed, and we hope that the Ministry will be able by publicity to convince people of the importance of sustaining the dignity and majesty of ceremonial by trying to keep litter until the end of the proceedings, and then to take it away. For the present, if the public persists in treating the route of a Royal procession as one vast litter bin, it must be emptied immediately, and much favourable comment was evoked by the speed and effectiveness with which this was done.

22. We gave full consideration to extending our appeal to the schools and youth clubs of London. With the valuable assistance of one of our members, Dr. John Brown, Education Officer to the London County Council, we were able to obtain the advice of teachers' associations on the subject of litter, and were granted exceptional facilities for publicity among schools in the London area. We are also grateful for help from the London Federation of Boys' Clubs and from the London Union of Mixed Clubs and Girls' Clubs. Children under school discipline are not bad offenders with litter, but we consider it of great importance that the good habits acquired at school should be retained out of the classroom and exercised in public places. Many suggestions were put to us that children should assist actively in dealing with the experimental work in the Parks, both by assisting in litter collection and by reminding the public to use litter bins. We saw many advantages in such active participation, but there were several practical difficulties both of organisation and of hygiene in sharing in the work of litter collection, and we are not in favour of any proposals which would encourage young people to criticise in public the habits of their elders. We studied the possibilities of holding a competition among schools and technical colleges for the design of a litter bin and for anti-litter slogans, but we were unable to recommend to the Ministry that the results would be commensurate with the considerable tasks of organisation.

23. Many other bodies, public and voluntary, are carrying out work against litter in public places, and we learnt with interest of the activities of many local authorities, the National Trust, the National Parks Commission, and the National

Federation of Women's Institutes, among others. Information and experience were shared wherever possible, and we wish these bodies well in their important work. We wish to acknowledge also the valuable work for the provision of publicity material on a national scale by the Anti-Litter Publicity Committee of the Central Office of Information.

### PART III

## Arrangements for the collection of litter in the Royal Parks

24. The Ministry spends from £9,000-£12,000 annually on the collection of litter in the Royal Parks alone: details of this expenditure are given in Appendix VI. The work of collection is performed by gardening labourers, chiefly at overtime rates, as most of the litter accumulates at holiday periods. The responsibilities of Park Keepers are disciplinary—to deal with people actually seen dropping litter. The Regulations in all the Parks provide for the prosecution of litter-droppers, with a maximum fine of £5.

25. The men work in gangs of about five, with spikes, brooms, baskets, and hand-trucks. The Ministry has tested, and continues to test, a variety of mechanical equipment for gathering litter; but, except for roads, nothing has proved as efficient and economical as gang labour. The gathered litter, together with the contents of litter bins, is removed to the Sheep Pen, Kensington Gardens, and burned as early in the day as possible except when fog threatens. About fifty men are engaged after a normal fine day in the summer for about an hour and a half; a small number are employed throughout the day. After fine Bank Holidays as many as 150 men, working all day, may be needed to move as much as five tons of litter.

26. The Ministry of Works has adopted, in the course of many years' experience with the problem of litter, a number of measures which have proved effective in controlling aspects of the litter problem. The ice-cream package, usually a sorry mess when discarded, is one of the most objectionable forms of litter; and it was found necessary to ban the sale of wrapped ice-cream altogether in the Parks. This provision, which is included in agreements with catering contractors, has been most successful. Some wrappers are, of course, brought in from outside; an improvement can however be hoped for as a result of the general spirit of co-operation among manufacturers of ice-cream, which we have recorded elsewhere. A 2d. deposit is also required on all bottles sold in the Parks. Over Whitsun week-end, 1953, before deposits were introduced, 4,091 bottles were left on the ground and 1,373 in bins. The following August, after the change, only 488 were left on the ground as against 1,384 in bins. It is possible to conclude from this that those who are capable of resisting the claims of a 2d. refund are also conscientious about litter!

27. With regard to enforcement of the Regulations, it is established policy for the Park Keeper not to institute a litter prosecution unless a person who has first been cautioned about dropping litter refuses to pick it up. We find this policy in accord with our own views, and we do not recommend any change.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

28. We have already referred in the Report to some of the many organisations which have helped us in our work. We would like also to record our debt to the Central Office of Information, Mr. W. B. Shearer, A.R.C.A., and the Education Officer's Department of the London County Council for valuable assistance in the production of the litter notice described in Paragraph 10; to Mr. G. E. Williams, M.S.I.A., of the Council of Industrial Design, the London County Council Central School of Arts and Crafts, and Messrs. Trollope and Colls, Ltd., for their contributions to the development of the prototype bin; to Mr. Gilbert Harding for recording the two messages about litter which were broadcast in the course of the experiments at the Serpentine Lido and for generously agreeing to make the recording generally available; to Mr. C. W. Rodd, of Messrs. T. Wall & Sons, Ltd. for enlisting the co-operation of manufacturers of ice-cream in the campaign against litter; and to the Bailiff of Royal Parks and the other officials of the Ministry of Works who have co-operated so efficiently with us in our experiments.

29. We would like, in particular, to express our personal appreciation of the services rendered to the Committee by the Dowager Lady Hillingdon, D.B.E., who attended most of our proceedings on behalf of the Dowager Marchioness of Reading; by Mr. Geoffrey de Freitas, M.P., who deputised for Mr. Michael Stewart during the latter's absence abroad; and by Mr. G. J. Spence, our Secretary, who has spared no effort to make the work of the Committee easy and pleasant.

*(Signed)* JOHN RODGERS, *Chairman*

STELLA READING

EVELYN BOTT

JOHN BROWN

ROBERT FRASER

D. A. FURBY

F. HOOPER

MICHAEL STEWART

14th December, 1954.

## APPENDIX I

*Litter in the Central Parks*  
*Percentages of litter in bins and on the ground*

Comparison of Statistics from 1953 and 1954

(A) ST. JAMES'S PARK (Where experimental methods (a)-(e) in Paragraph 17 were used)

	EASTER Good Friday- Easter Monday		WHITSUN Saturday-Monday		AUGUST BANK HOLIDAY Saturday-Monday		AUGUST 28-29* 1954
	1953	1954	1953	1954	1953	1954	
Bins ...	74	73	56	80	72	86	86
Ground	26	27	44	20	28	14	14

(B) HYDE PARK (Where experiments were carried out in two limited areas)

Bins ...	66	78	47	73	40	53	79
Ground	34	22	53	27	60	47	21

(C) KENSINGTON GARDENS (Where no experiments were carried out)

Bins ...	67	63	83	73	85	69	70
Ground	33	37	17	27	15	31	30

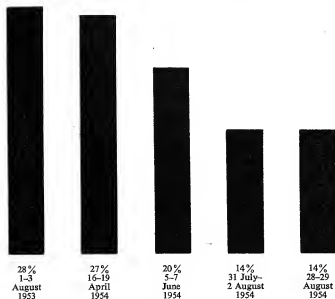
\* One of the few fine week-ends of that summer.



## APPENDIX II

### *Progressive improvement of litter habits St. James's Park*

PERCENTAGE OF LITTER LEFT ON GROUND



*Recommended requirements for litter bins  
for the Royal Parks*

1. It should be unnecessary to label a litter bin; it should be a "poster without words" and:

- (i) Readily visible to the public and recognisable as a litter bin;
- (ii) Easy to stuff with litter in a variety of shapes, sizes and conditions;
- (iii) While being of a reasonable size, able to contain its litter well without letting it bulge out or blow about;
- (iv) Sufficiently large to contain a day's litter;
- (v) Able to conceal its contents from passers-by;
- (vi) Easy to empty: an inner container readily removable by one man and which does not stick nor yet allow litter to fall between the inner and outer containers is the best solution;
- (vii) Firmly fixed to the ground or to a post to prevent detaching by hooligans;
- (viii) Non-inflammable and constructed to permit the draining of liquids at the bottom;
- (ix) In harmony with the scenery of the Parks.

2. Such a bin is more expensive than those it is designed to replace: if set in concrete as a permanent fixture, the Ministry advises us that it will cost approximately £10, including installation costs. We consider that this additional expense is warranted for the following reasons:

- (i) In view of the long life expected for the outer container (over ten years), the expenditure can be considered largely as a capital outlay, rather than current expenditure.
- (ii) The design is, in our view, a successful attempt to render a utilitarian object attractive, and thus to contribute to the appearance of the Parks, which is the ultimate object of the litter campaign.
- (iii) As has been emphasised above, the bin is in effect much more than a mere receptacle for litter—it is in itself an item of publicity, designed positively to attract the attention and interest of the public, and to induce people to put their litter inside rather than on the ground.
- (iv) We consider that the cost should be set against the consequential reduction in the cost of collecting litter from the ground due to more widespread use of the bin; as is pointed out in Paragraph 10, the work of collection from the ground is three times that of emptying bins.

## APPENDIX IV

*Specification of the recommended litter bin*

## OUTER CONTAINER

Overall top diameter—20½"; bottom diameter—15½".

Height of container—2' 6".

Materials—2" × ½" Teak slats (untreated), flush screw fixed to 1" × ½" metal rings, shaped and parallel to the pitch of the side. Bottom ring to be welded to 2" × ½" metal cross frame, welded at butting, which is welded to the top of a 2" circular tube, the lower end of which is carried into the ground and split. The metal to be galvanised and painted aluminium. Battens to be secured to rings by flush attachments, and backed by sheet aluminium enamelled on the outside cherry red (Rose Karen Poulsen, British Colour Council Wilson Chart, Vol. 2, No. 722).

## INNER CONTAINER

Of ½" wire mesh, shaped to fit inside outer container; designed for easy emptying by one man and to stand up to rough handling.

APPENDIX V  
*St. James's Park, Easter, 1954*  
*Results of sample analysis*

	Four Sample Bins	Equivalent Area of Ground
Total Weight ... ..	85 lbs.	31 lbs.
<i>Nos. of Articles at weight</i>		
Type of litter:		
Matches ... ..	187	155
Cigarette Packets ... ..	44	174
Match Boxes ... ..	7	35
Cigarette Stubs ... ..	18	99
Tobacco Wrappings ... ..	1	1
Newspapers ... ..	60	43
Bus Tickets ... ..	140	232
Theatre Tickets ... ..	7	11
Chair Tickets ... ..	85	68
Other Tickets ... ..	1	1
Bottles ... ..	23	19
Fruit Skins, etc. ... ..	35 lbs.	8 lbs.
Food... ..	22 lbs.	5 lbs.
Wrappings—Ice-Cream ... ..	3 lbs.	2 lbs.
Sweet ... ..	7 lbs.	7 lbs.
Other Food ... ..	271	137

APPENDIX VI  
*Estimated annual cost of litter collection*  
*in the Royal Parks*

<b>LABOUR</b>			
50 men at 10 hours per week for 40 weeks at 3s. per hour ... ..			£5,000
<b>PLANT</b>			
Road sweeper ... ..			£600
Lorries ... ..			£1,300
Trucks and other equipment ... ..			£100
			£2,000
<b>BINS</b>			
Annual maintenance ... ..			£500
Purchase ... ..			£500
			£1,000
<b>CEREMONIAL EXPENDITURE (Trooping the Colour, State Visits, etc.)</b>			
(including labour) ... ..			£1,000
			£9,000

In 1953, Coronation year, the expenditure rose to about £12,000.

THIS PARK  
≈ IS ≈  
BEAUTIFUL

*Please help to keep  
it tidy by putting litter  
in the bins*



The coloured notice with floral border

(Paragraph 10)



The prototype litter bin  
(*Paragraph 11*)



The anti-litter banner displayed on the barge at the Serpentine Lido  
(*Paragraph 20*)



Litter scattered in front of Buckingham Palace



The anti-litter appeal displayed on the road sweeper  
(Paragraph 21)



The Return of Her Majesty the Queen from the Commonwealth Tour, May, 1954  
The Mall—Before and After (*Paragraph 16*)